

Message Text

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PAGE 01 IZMIR 00071 100925Z

12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1533

INFO AMCONSUL ADANA

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

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SUBJECT: AEGEAN UNIVERSITY SEMINAR ON MARITIME QUESTIONS

REF: ANKARA 1645

1. AEGEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE OF MARITIME SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SPONSORED IZMIR SEMINAR MARCH 1-4 ON "MARITIME QUESTIONS AND TURKISH MARITIME LAW". SESSIONS FOLLOWING SEMINAR'S OPENING DAY WERE CLOSED, AND THE REPORTEDLY 37 PARTICIPANTS WERE FOR THE MOST PART NOT PUBLICLY IDENTIFIED. SUCH ACCOUNTS OF DISCUSSIONS AS EMERGED IN PRESS AND GUARDED

PAGE 2 RUFLAEA3079 C O N F I D E N T I A L

PRIVATE COMMENTS INDICATE PRIMARY TOPIC WAS THE AEGEAN;
ALTHOUGH AU RECTOR TOLD US SEMINAR WAS NOT "POLITICAL", CON-
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PAGE 02 IZMIR 00071 100925Z

FLICTING TURKISH-GREEK CLAIMS AND THEIR POLITICAL-STRATEGIC-

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS WERE FEATURED, IF NOT THE SEMINAR'S CENTRAL THEME.

2. SEMINAR WAS OPENED MARCH 1 BY AU ACTING RECTOR IBRAHIM KARACO, WHO REPORTEDLY COMPLAINED THAT GOT NOT GIVING "THIS VERY IMPORTANT SUBJECT" (IMPLICITLY THE AEGEAN) SUFFICIENT ATTENTION, A THEME ECHOED IN RPP CHAIRMAN ECEVIT'S CABLE TO THE SEMINAR (REFTEL). YUKSEL SOYLEMEZ, MFA DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS, REPORTEDLY SPOKE MORE SPECIFICALLY OF "THE AEGEAN QUESTION", CALLING FOR A MEETING WITH THE GOG TO REORGANIZE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES TO PERMIT MUTUAL BENEFIT FROM THE AEGEAN, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE "NATURAL EXTENSIONS OF ANATOLIA AND THE GREEK PENINSULA IN THE SEA". SOYLEMEZ REPORTEDLY DESCRIBED AS CONSTRUCTIVE GREECE'S ALLEGED SOFTENING OF INSISTENCE THAT THE ISSUE BE TAKEN TO THE ICJ AND GREEK AGREEMENT TO MEET BILATERALLY AT BERNE.

3. LOCAL PRESS GAVE MORE LENGTHY ACCOUNT OF STATEMENT READ

PAGE 3 RUFLAEA3079 C O N F I D E N T I A L

BY NAVY CAPTAIN VAROL ATALAY, WHO DISCUSSED IN GENERAL, THEORETICAL TERMS THE "STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF OUR SEAS". ATALAY APPEARED BE WARNING THAT TURKEY SHOULD BE MORE ACTIVE IN ASSERTING ITS CLAIMS IN THE AEGEAN LEST IT ULTIMATELY LOSE ITS ACCESS TO THAT SEA.

4. A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF CLOSED DISCUSSION RELATED TO INTERNATIONAL LAW GOVERNING CONTINENTAL SHELVES AND THE NATURE OF TURKEY'S SHELF. REPORTEDLY SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS PRODUCED WHAT WAS VARIOUSLY DESCRIBED AS A DRAFT LAW OR DRAFT POSITION ON THIS TOPIC. DURING COURSE OF THIS DISCUSSION YUKSEL SOYLEMEZ REPORTEDLY WARNED THAT WERE GREECE TO EXPAND ITS TERRITORIAL WATERS FROM "6 MILES TO 12 MILES A VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM WOULD BE POSED FOR TURKISH SECURITY"; HE REPORTEDLY AFFIRMED THAT THE GOG WAS AWARE OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THIS ISSUE AND ALSO VOICED OPINION UPCOMING LOS CONFERENCE WOULD NOT CONCEDE GREECE SUCH EXTENSION.

5. DURING COURSE OF INTERVENTIONS OUTLINED ABOVE AND DURING EXAMINATION OF MEDITERRANEAN AND AEGEAN POLLUTION, PARTICIPANTS REPEATEDLY CALLED FOR REESTABLISHMENT OF MINISTRY OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 IZMIR 00071 100925Z

MARITIME AFFAIRS, AND REPORTEDLY FORMALLY AGREED SO

PAGE 4 RUFLAEA3079 C O N F I D E N T I A L

RECOMMEND TO GOT.

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